



Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area

As part of the Consolidated Plan for 2005-2009, the City has identified the Empowerment Zone as a CDBG Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy (NRS) Area. In recognition of this, the City made a concerted effort to solicit and fund projects that would further revitalize and develop this federally designated area. The Action Plan for 2005-2006 includes the following physical projects that are a direct result of this effort:

Project	Allocation
Claude Barry Manufacturing Facility	\$ 159,220
El Paso Rehabilitation Center Renovation Phase II (Fire Safety Equipment and Lighting Fixtures) Design and Construction	134,070
Estrella Rivera Park Improvements – Design and Construction	245,956
Opportunity Center for the Homeless Expansion Project	319,761
Program Sense of Place	510,500
Rawlings Dental Center	640,428
Ysleta Skate Park – Design and Construction	594,604
7 Projects	\$2,604,539

Commitment of Funds in Future Program Years:

The El Paso City Council, in adopting several 31st Year (2005-2006) CDBG public improvement projects in phases, has committed to carry out the following activities in future program years:

32ND YEAR (2006-2007) COMMITMENT

Project	Activity	Amount
*Nations Tobin Park Paving	Construction	\$ 299,050
*San Juan Senior Center Remodeling	Construction	1,004,193
*Ysleta Branch Library Expansion	Construction	360,721
Total Committed – 32nd Year		\$1,663,964

*Design was funded in the 31st Year (2005-2006) CD Program

Other Actions

As part of this annual Action Plan for 2005-2006, the City proposes to carry out actions to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs; foster, maintain and remove barriers to affordable housing, evaluate and reduce lead-based hazards, reduce the number of poverty level families; develop institutional structure and enhance coordination between public and private housing and social service agencies; and foster housing improvements and resident initiatives.

Meeting Under-served Needs

In the absence of additional funding, the most effective way to meet under-served needs is to utilize existing funding more efficiently. The City has entered into a contract with the Texas Workforce Commission to secure the required local match for Federal Child Care funds. During the 30th Year, the grantees committed \$106,655 of the funds awarded them under the CDBG budget, which will be matched by the Texas Workforce Commission in the amount of \$314,043, resulting in \$420,698 in licensed childcare being made available for low- and moderate-income residents of the City of El Paso. All applicants for social services funds continued to be required to demonstrate a minimum of 15% cash matching funds.

The City proposes to continue fostering collaboration among social service agencies through a unique method for distributing the CDBG social service funds. For the tenth consecutive year, applicants for 31st Year CDBG social service funds were asked to form collaboratives to address five categories of needs. The targeted areas for the 31st Year were: (1) children and youth services; (2) economic opportunity services; (3) homeless, emergency shelter and housing services; (4) mental and medical health services; and (5) seniors and persons with disabilities services. One of the main goals of these collaboratives, most of which meet year round, is to work together in soliciting funds and securing matching funds. The City will continue to work with the social service agencies and the Steering Committee to refine the collaborative approach to the distribution of funds.

Foster, Maintain and Remove Barriers to Affordable Housing

In addition to providing CDBG and HOME funding for affordable housing activities, the City will provide technical assistance to housing non-profits and attempt to strengthen the network of housing non-profits by fostering communication and collaboration.

Approximately 22% of all persons in El Paso have incomes below the poverty rate. This is a barrier to affordable housing, since many families cannot afford to make the needed repairs to their homes and others cannot afford to purchase a home without some type of assistance.

In an effort to assist with the removal of this barrier, the City of El Paso's Housing Programs Division will continue to assist in increasing the stock of affordable housing through its programs of Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and First-time Homebuyers.

The City's Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Program will continue to provide financing to low and moderate income homeowners, to help them make necessary repairs to upgrade their homes and comply with City code requirements. Loans and grants will also be available to assist with compliance of historic preservation guidelines, asbestos abatement, lead-based paint hazard abatement, accessibility modifications and energy conservation. It is projected that the number of homeowners receiving assistance this year through the Rehabilitation Program will be increased (from 13) to 15.

When rehabilitation is not feasible, the City's Reconstruction Program will continue to provide low-income homeowners with low interest loans (0% to 3%) and grants. This is an additional option that gives low-income homeowners an opportunity to demolish their existing severely deteriorated homes and construct a new home on their same lot. This program is projected to increase its assistance (from 6) to 10 low-income homeowners.

The City's Investor-Owned Rehabilitation Program will offer assistance to investors who need to rehabilitate their rental units. Some of these units are in very poor condition and some are even condemned. The successful repair of these units will result in increasing the stock of affordable rental units that are decent, safe and sanitary. It is projected that 115 affordable rental units will be rehabilitated through the Investor-Owned Rehabilitation Program this year.

Thru the use of HOME set-aside funds, the Housing Programs division will continue its collaboration with the local Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDO's). It is projected that the construction of 22 new affordable units will be completed by the CHDO's, with the City's assistance, during the year.

Another barrier to affordable housing is the lack of education and financial literacy among low-income potential first-time homebuyers. There is a great need to ensure potential homebuyers understand the loan process for purchasing a home, as well as how to maintain their finances once they become home owners. To assist in alleviating this barrier, the City will fund two projects through local Non-Profit agencies that conduct housing counseling and training services for potential low income first-time homebuyers. One of the Non-Profit agencies focuses on assisting persons with disabilities and it is projected that the number of families receiving financial literacy counseling will increase this year.

The City's Median Family Income is \$35,432 and approximately 22% of all persons have incomes below the poverty rate. As a result, it is even more difficult for families to realize their dream of homeownership. The Housing Programs division also funds a first time Home Buyer Assistance Program that assists low-income residents of the City to purchase a home. This program has received numerous accolades and has helped hundreds of low-income first-time homebuyers. During this year, the Program will be reviewed to see if there are any recommendations or revisions that would improve the program and provide even greater assistance.

During 2005-2006, the City's Fair Housing Task Force will continue to work through a variety of subcommittees to address the impediments to fair housing choice. The Third Report from the Task Force to City Council was presented April 20, 2004. The next Report is scheduled for 2006 and will include recommendations and actions taken to alleviate the impediments to fair housing choice. The Task Force will be researching 12 different Impediments that have been identified by the public.

One of the Impediments to Fair Housing Choice concerns "NIMBYism", which is the attitude of "Not in My Backyard." This negative attitude continues to exist and promotes

stereotyping of public housing. There have been recent changes in policy development that allows for affordable housing to develop in areas that were once not eligible. The Task Force plans to thoroughly research this Impediment and will submit its recommendations to City Council. In addition, the City's Housing Programs division will be working with the Housing Authority of the City of El Paso (HACEP) this year on a housing project to produce approximately 22 affordable units.

The City of El Paso has made several land use policy changes and modifications that have reduced the cost of housing development. These have facilitated the construction of affordable housing in the community and help to address the barriers to affordable housing. One significant change was the adoption of the Infill Development Ordinance incorporated into the Zoning Code of the City of El Paso. The Infill ordinance purpose is to create an infill development mechanism encouraging a flexible approach to planning, designing and development, support a simplified review procedure for plan approval, permit the conversion of buildings and properties and encourage planning and design flexibility and innovations. The ordinance has mechanisms for assurances that neighborhood compatibility and effective land uses and public services are met. Density and the combination of uses are part of this Ordinance's flexibility for infill projects.

There has also been an adoption of the Neighborhood Recognition Ordinance and subsequent growth, activity and involvement of neighborhood associations in the land development process. The Neighborhood Associations are now able to express their opinions at hearings and become more involved in the City's policy decisions.

Evaluate and Reduce Lead Based Hazards

El Paso takes a team approach to addressing the issue of childhood lead poisoning. The El Paso City-County Health and Environmental District and the Department of Community and Human Development - Housing Programs Division participate in the identification of the extent of the problem, review of data, and formulation/re-formulation of action plans.

For fiscal year 2005, the El Paso City-County Health and Environmental District (The District) applied for and received a renewal to their grant from The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) in the amount of \$50,000 to continue their Comprehensive Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP). The City of El Paso apportioned \$10,000 to make the program whole. The District has already reapplied for fiscal year 2006. To date the District has not been notified as to whether the grant will be renewed. The program is based in the Community Assessment Division of the District and is manned solely by the Lead Program Nurse. The Epidemiology Coordinator retired on December 31, 2004. The program nurse has produced and is currently following an established case management protocol.

The program nurse is responsible for case management of elevated blood lead level follow up and for outreach screening clinics. Staff in the Epidemiology program continues to provide in-kind support, including case investigation and family education.

In the coming year, the City of El Paso's Public Health and Environmental Agencies, as well as the local housing agencies, will continue focusing on preventing lead poisoning in children before it occurs. This attempted shift to "community level intervention" will focus on the coordination of all involved local and governmental agencies to ensure that all aspects of childhood lead poisoning prevention - health, housing, and environment - are being addressed, and to provide the most comprehensive and cost-effective services to at-risk children, their parents, and their health-care providers. Data collected through the CLPPP continues to be reviewed to identify children and risk factors for which intervention needs to be targeted. The CLPPP will continue to analyze blood lead testing data to identify exposure patterns and high-risk populations. Reduction strategies will continue to focus on maximizing screening, education, and abatement efforts.

Public Health And Environmental Agencies

All collaborating agencies will work toward meeting the objectives listed below:

- Ensure that necessary screening services are provided;
- Analyze surveillance and other data to identify exposure patterns and high-risk populations;
- Implement a primary prevention plan that focuses on the highest risk sources and populations;
- Coordinate prevention activities with other pertinent health, housing, and environmental agencies; and,
- Ensure that medical and environmental follow-up services for poisoned children are provided.

Screening

Screening children for lead poisoning is critical both to identify poisoned children and to provide data that can be used to plan community-wide interventions. The CLPPP will continue to reinforce the Texas Department of Health recommendation to screen all children at age 12 and 24 months and older children who have not had a previous lead test. The District continues to conduct childhood blood lead level tests at its neighborhood clinics, as part of the Texas Health Steps battery of exams. In the spring of 2004, the Lead Program Nurse conducted screening at 2 Day Care Centers in south El Paso and at the Lower Valley Health Fair.

Surveillance And Risk Management

Before a primary prevention plan can be designed and implemented, public health agencies must assess the sources of lead in the community, exposure patterns, and high-risk populations. The El Paso City-County Health and Environmental District will

continue to refine risk assessment activities while soliciting cooperation and assistance from housing and environmental agencies when appropriate. Presently, various members of the Public Health community form the joint task force of “Encuentros: Binational Program On Environmental Lead and Children”, a research project led by the University of Texas at El Paso. The Health District is represented. The District and the City will continue collaborating in the collection of blood lead test, environmental, housing, and demographic data needed to undertake a community-based risk assessment.

Primary Prevention

The most critical issue in the eradication of lead poisoning in children is the need to identify and remove sources of exposure to lead before children are harmed - the need for primary prevention. In 2003, the District and the City collaborated in the submitting of a grant proposal to HUD. The District provided the blood lead data analysis, and the City put the proposal together. In the fall of 2003, HUD awarded the City El Paso \$721,300. The District and the City have continued working together to meet the objectives of the grant. The District will continue to implement public awareness and education efforts, especially targeted at areas and populations at highest risk. Both entities will continue to focus on primary prevention and target resources to the most pervasive sources and the highest risk populations.

Interagency Coordination

To prevent lead poisoning, all public agencies with a connection to this problem need to be enlisted in the effort to eliminate the occurrence of blood lead poisoning. The activities of different types of agencies at different levels of government need to be coordinated in order to properly address the issue. The City of El Paso will attempt to move toward organizing interagency task forces or committees and in ensuring that all involved agencies communicate regularly. Under a Memorandum of Understanding, the District tests children referred by the City and promote the City's housing rehabilitation efforts using a flyer furnished by Community Development. The City, in turn, refers children under age six years for testing who reside in homes where a lead based hazard does or may exist.

In July of 2004, a Regional Lead Coalition was formed and chaired by the Epidemiology Coordinator. This coalition continues to meet on a monthly basis. Its members are composed of representatives of various organizations in the community, including governmental and non governmental agencies. Membership is open to private citizens. At present, the coalition is chaired by Dr. John Haynes of the Poison Control Center. It is co-chaired by the Lead Program Nurse.

Providing Services To Poisoned Children

The El Paso City-County Health and Environmental District, as well as other public health agencies, will continue to be responsible for ensuring that lead-poisoned children receive appropriate medical and environmental follow-up through a formal case-

management system. Until lead poisoning has successfully been eliminated, the City of El Paso's public health agencies will continue to devote much of their lead-poisoning prevention resources to case management services for poisoned children.

Housing Agency

The El Paso Housing Authority has complete lead based paint testing in all of its public housing communities. As a result of this testing, abatement activities were found to be required at only four sites. The abatement work has been completed.

City Housing Programs

Incorporated as standard practice in all City of El Paso Department of Community and Human Development contracts for construction or rehabilitation of residential structures, all contractors and subcontractors are required to comply with all the provisions for the elimination of lead-based paint hazards set forth in the Final New HUD Regulation on Lead-Based Paint Hazards in Federally Owned Housing and Housing Receiving Federal Assistance Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention in Certain Residential Structures, 24 CFR Part 35. To comply with these new regulations, the City initiated new procedures in its federally funded housing rehabilitation programs. The method established by the City was initiated with a request for bids issued to six qualified consultants to perform professional environmental services related to our rehabilitation activities. All six consultants submitted bids and one of these firms was awarded inspections on the basis of a best value procurement evaluation performed by the Department.

The consultants conduct lead-based inspections using XRF (x-ray fluorescent), spectrum analysis, which is the most efficient method to detect lead-based paint without disturbing existing painted surfaces. Their inspection reports include a list of occupants, inspection findings, sampling plan, certifications for the firm, the Lead Inspector, the Risk Assessor, and the Spectrum Analyzer's radiation safety record. Risk assessments include monitoring and specifications for workers doing the removal and/or encapsulation. All of the identified lead-based paint is abated or encapsulated including surfaces that are not being disturbed. Finally, the consultants perform wipe samples and clear the project.

The implementation of this procedure has generated the following data that provides a clearer indication of the number of housing units that contain a lead-based paint hazard. Out of the 110 housing units in the pool of applications being processed to receive federal assistance, 107 were identified as target housing as defined by the regulations. Consequently, lead-based paint inspections on 66 units resulted in 30 units that are in process (bidding, application approval or under construction); seventeen (17) have been cancelled, twelve (12) have been determined to be infeasible and are being processed as Home Reconstruction Projects; and seventeen (17) had no Lead-Based Paint hazard. Thirty one (31) units are awaiting LBP testing.

The City continues to improve the methods and procedures for identifying and eliminating lead-based- paint hazards in all housing built prior to 1978 that is being processed for rehabilitation through the City's Housing Programs Division. The Technical Division Staff have received training for Lead Inspectors, and five Construction Specialists have acquired State certification. Two staff members have also received training in Risk Assessment and all staff has been trained in Lead Safe Practices. In addition, 12 of the qualified Contractors performing rehabilitation work through the City's Housing Rehabilitation Program have also received training in Lead Safe Practices.

As required by Subpart 35.130, the City is providing the lead hazard information pamphlet entitled "Protect Your Family From Lead In Your Home" to every owner-occupied dwelling unit household, which recommends that parents consult their doctor for advice on testing their children. In addition, all owners are given a copy of the Lead Inspection/Risk Assessment, Lead Project Design and Clearance reports.

The City's Housing Program Division continues to revise and update the Lead Hazard Control Program. The City applied for and received a Lead Hazard Control Grant from The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development in the amount of \$721,300 for a 42-month period. The Grant places more restrictions on implementation than the current program that the City has in place. Another layer of inspection has been added, as the State Department of Health, Toxic Substances Control Division must be informed of all Lead Based Paint activities and must be inspected by the same during the construction phase. Only State-certified Lead Firms must be utilized to perform all lead-based paint abatement and clearances.

The City of El Paso, Housing Programs Division has opted to abate all identified lead based paint components from all of our qualified applicants homes rather than performing interim controls. In addition, all children under six (6) years of age living in homes receiving assistance for housing rehabilitation must be tested for elevated blood lead levels. Staff has received and is still receiving training on implementation, inspection, design and federal reporting requirements. The methods described above are still being utilized for identification of Lead Based Paint Hazards; the major change being in the utilization of State-certified Lead Firms and testing of children for elevated blood lead levels as mandatory when drawing down funds from the Lead Based Paint Hazard Control Program.

A number of the Housing Division's Qualified Contractors have expressed an interest in getting State certified as Lead Firms in order to perform abatement activities with their own personnel. This will require certifications for Lead Inspectors/Risk Assessors, XRF Certification and Lead Firm Accreditation. One of the qualified contractors has acquired certification and is performing Lead abatement activities at this time. The remaining qualified contractors are utilizing certified lead firms as subcontractors rather than acquiring certification themselves.

The City of El Paso has formed a partnership with the El Paso City-County Health and

Environmental Department to facilitate dissemination of information, testing, and formation of policies and procedures for implementation of the Lead Hazard Control Grant Program. The City is actively promoting the Lead Hazard Control Program and has hired a Neighborhood Relations Coordinator in order to inform the general public, neighborhood organizations, and area agencies that can assist in promoting the Lead Hazard Control program.

Community Legal Intervention

Primary prevention, in theory has always been the goal of Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Programs in the City of El Paso. In practice however, The City of El Paso programs focus exclusively on secondary prevention, dealing with children who have already been poisoned. As the City's programs begin to shift the emphasis to primary prevention, efforts must be designed to systematically identify and pre-mediate environmental sources of lead, including most importantly, dwellings containing old lead-based paint.

The shift from case management to community-level intervention will require a fundamental shift in perspective, with the focus shifting from the individual child to a population of children at risk and the environment where they live. The ultimate goal of community level intervention in the City of El Paso is to identify and respond to sources of cases of lead poisoning.

Reduce the Number of Poverty Level Families

The Department of Housing and Urban Development Rental Housing Income Guidelines for fiscal year 2005 defines poverty level as 50% of median income. For a family of one, this is \$14,850 or less, and for a family of four, the combined family income is \$21,200 or less. The U.S. Census Bureau for year 2000 estimates that the City of El Paso has 26,968 families with income below the poverty level. This represents 19.0% of the total City of El Paso population of 142,151 families.

When looking at the large number of persons at or below poverty, we recognize that the causes of poverty are many and pervasive. They include inadequate educational opportunity, lack of high paying and stable jobs, family and individual violence, a shortage of affordable health care, and the lack of affordable housing to name some of the major causes. The primary goal of Community Development funding sources are to address the many causes and needs of this large segment of low- and moderate-income persons within the City of El Paso.

The City's 31st Year (2005-2006) anti-poverty strategy involves funding supportive services that help to improve social conditions for poverty-level persons. The City has consistently dedicated to social services the maximum amount of its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) that can be allocated to this category (15% of the annual grant plus the previous year's program income). These supportive services cover a wide range, including mental and medical health, shelter, youth development, and day care to help stabilize conditions for families trying to escape from conditions of

poverty. In the 2005 Fiscal Year, the City will use \$1,679,903 in CDBG funds for social services. Emergency Shelter Grant funds totaling \$374,384 will also be used by 11 homeless agencies to provide at least temporary assistance to families threatened with severe effects of poverty, eviction and homelessness.

A diverse range of public facility projects is proposed for 31st year funding. Maintaining and upgrading low- and moderate-income neighborhoods is a high priority. Six (6) street and drainage projects are to be funded. These projects include street, sidewalk, and drainage improvements as well as street lighting, and wheelchair ramps. The City will continue to fund the Citywide Curb Cut Demand Program in the amount of \$90,117, providing increased accessibility for persons with disabilities near homes, paths of travel and places of employment.

Communities need areas for play and exercise. CDBG funds will be used to build a new park and provide major improvements to existing parks in low- and moderate-income areas of the City. ADA accessibility as well as ADA playground equipment continues to be a high priority. Benches, picnic units, lighting, trash receptacles, playground equipment, park and rule signs are planned as well as skate equipment. With water a continued concern for our area, several parks will have more efficient irrigation systems installed. As health information and the need for exercise plays a larger role in everyday life, the new Ruby Coates Park will have a walk/jog path. A walk/jog path will be added to Ysleta Park as well as a skate park area and other amenities. Improvements will also be funded at the Estrella Rivera Park, which will include new playground equipment.

Safety is always a concern. The Central Fire Station located at 201 S. Florence Avenue serves a densely populated area of the City. The comfort and well being of the station staff as well as the numerous visitors to this station will be greatly enhanced with the installation of a new heating and cooling system for this older building.

Four non-profit agencies will receive CD funds under the category of public facilities. The El Paso Rehabilitation Center (EPRC) who serves the needs of early childhood development and daycare services for many low- and moderate-income families will receive funding to improve safety features within the building. Funding will be used to install a new fire alarm system and lighting.

Homelessness continues as a major issue leading to and occurring as a result of poverty and the many causes of poverty. Over the years, CD funds have funded many programs to address the myriad issues of homelessness. The second non-profit receiving funding is the Opportunity Center for the Homeless El Paso Coalition for the Homeless. One full-time Homeless Grants Planner and one full-time Administrative Assistant will be funded to continue to coordinate the Consolidated Continuum of Care application to HUD and address related to homelessness in El Paso that include the chronic homeless plan discharge planning and collaborative efforts between members of the El Paso Coalition the Homeless.

Additional funds to serve homeless needs will be used by the third non-profit agency, the Opportunity Center for the Homeless. Expansion of their facility located at 1208 Myrtle Avenue will provide 12 new offices, 3 conference rooms, an additional food pantry store, backpack storage space, client clothing space and donation receiving area. Exterior renovations, new sidewalks and landscaping will contribute to the revitalization of Myrtle Avenue.

CD funds will be used for the fourth non-profit agency by addressing the growing needs of the HIV/AIDS special population of El Paso. Expansion of the La Fe Care Center located at 1505 Mescalero Drive will include enclosing the existing courtyard to create a waiting area, thereby increasing seating capacity from ten seats to approximately 40 seats and provide an area for the addition of six new exam rooms and two bathrooms.

The above projects indicate the continued commitment to addressing the needs of low- and moderate-income persons. Community Development funds in the amount of \$10,515,214 have been budgeted for the above planning and public facility projects in 2005-2006.

A primary goal of the Community Development Department is to provide new housing and retain existing housing for low and moderate-income persons. The 31st Year budget includes \$5,273,437 in HOME Investment Partnerships Grant funds for housing.

These monies will be spent on new construction, rehabilitation of single-family and multi-family housing, and to continue the First-Time Home Buyer's Assistance Program.

To provide outreach services as well as comprehensive housing counseling education services for persons with disabilities and for very low and low- to moderate-incomes families, CD funding in the amount of \$75,079 has been budgeted for the 31st Year to fund the United Cerebral Palsy of Texas and the YWCA Homeownership Center to provide these services, which are linked, to the City's First-Time Homebuyer Program.

Although CD funds are not budgeted for the Upper Rio Grande @ Work System or the Housing Authority of El Paso, these agencies have many of the same goals as the CD program. These agencies merit mentioning in that by working together, CD funds do not supplant but augment the services as described below.

The Upper Rio Grande @ Work System, which is the local employment and business development center, continues its work with adult job placement and training, youth and child care services, and employer recruiting, screening and referrals. The agency, through its contractors, is responsible for vocational and academic training, on-the-job and customized training, work experience, veterans assistance, counseling, case management and supportive services such as: TANF, food stamp recipients and Welfare-to-Work. The mission of the agency is to bring employers and job seekers together.

Upper Rio Grande @ Work operates on a \$45 - \$80 million dollar a year budget, after grants and funding from the Department of Labor, the Texas Workforce Commission and private monies. The agency uses these funds to offer qualified clients the skills necessary to obtain or retain employment in demand occupations.

Upper Rio Grande @ Work is the local leader in workforce development, organizing effective events designed to unite employers and job seekers. Upper Rio Grande @ Work organizes two yearly job expos that attract a combined total of 46,000 job seekers and more than 400 local employers – the largest of any El Paso employment expos. Upper Rio Grande @ Work also coordinates a Job-A-Thon in partnership with area television stations. The project is designed to inform viewers of the different job openings posted in the Upper Rio Grande @ Work Job Bank. The event reaches out to more than 250,000 households.

The Housing Authority of the City of El Paso (HACEP) will continue to offer affordable housing to low and very low-income families while providing public housing residents with educational and supportive services to equip them for self-sufficiency. Residents will also be provided with counseling and technical support to start their own business as well as preparing for homeownership.

The City continues to be the fiscal agent for the Empowerment Zone (EZ) and provides support and oversight of the funds allocated to the EZ Corporation. This program fosters economic development and job creation in their respective areas and helps to alleviate one of the primary causes of poverty - unemployment.

Develop Institutional Structure and Enhance Coordination between Agencies

The City's Department of Community and Human Development (DCHD) will continue to participate in the Homeless Coalition, the Affordable Housing Coalition, and the El Paso Collaborative for Community and Economic Development. The DCHD will also continue to promote interagency communication and coordination through social service collaboratives, established to facilitate the distribution of CDBG and ESG funds. Approximately 46 agencies will receive CD funds in the 31st Program Year, and all participate in one of the five collaboratives. The social service collaboratives will meet throughout the year to improve service delivery. In addition, the DCHD works closely with the Coalition for Children and Youth, which has been organized to improve the access of member agencies to other funding resources.

The City and the El Paso Housing Authority have a record of cooperation. While there are no HACEP project in the 31st Year Program, the City will continue to support HACEP in all its efforts to provide decent housing to low income El Pasoans and to access additional funding.

The City will also continue to work with local financial institutions, non-profits, CBDO's and CHDO's, to encourage them to participate in affordable housing projects. The DCHD will also continue to work closely with the El Paso Empowerment Zone

Corporation to coordinate affordable housing and economic development activities.

Public Housing Objectives and Resident Initiatives

The City will support the efforts of the Housing Authority of the City of El Paso (HACEP) to improve conditions for HACEP residents. The overall objective of the HACEP is to provide low-income families housing that is affordable, decent, safe and sanitary with supportive services that promote self-sufficiency.

The mission of the Housing Authority of the City of El Paso (HACEP) is to provide and increase safe, decent, sanitary, and affordable housing for assisted families at or below 80% of median income by maintaining the Housing Authority's existing housing stock and ensuring that private rentals under the Section 8 programs meet HUD Housing Quality Standards.

To the greatest extent possible, the Housing Authority of the City of El Paso ensures equal opportunities in housing and promotes a transitional housing environment that is designed to help families achieve economic independence by virtue of self-sufficiency programs, resident business ventures, resident employment and homeownership opportunities. As a result, the Housing Authority improves the quality of life and economic viability in the City of El Paso.

In the year 2005, the Housing Authority of the City of El Paso will continue to be the 16th largest Housing Authority in the United States and the 2nd largest in the state of Texas. For the past eight years, the HACEP has been rated and designated by HUD with a High Performance status. Year 2005, HACEP achieved a Public Housing Assessment Score of 97, making the Housing Authority of the City of El Paso one of the highest-ranking public Housing Authority of its size at the national level.

The Housing Authority of the City of El Paso has prepared an Annual PHA Plan in compliance with Section 511 of the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 and the ensuing HUD requirements. The Housing Authority of the City of El Paso in partnership with agencies from all levels of government, the business community, non-profit community groups, and residents will use this plan as a road map to reach the "higher quality of life" destination.

The most important challenges to be met by the Housing Authority of the City of El Paso during FY 2005 include:

Reduce Drug and Alcohol Abuse Through Grant Funded Programs Activities

The Housing Authority of the City of El Paso (HACEP) secured a \$157,671.00 grant from the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (TCADA) for fiscal year 2005 for Drug Prevention for Youth It consists on 10 sessions of 2hrs each with a curriculum that addresses the Drug Prevention Program.

HACEP received a Grant for \$500,000 with a cash match of \$100,000 to implement a Residents Self Sufficiency Program where residents will be enrolled with Project Arriba to ensure that at the end of three years, Residents will be able to have jobs that pay \$11.00 an hour. HACEP applied for HOPE VI a revitalization project for Alamito Community. The Grant was awarded for \$20 million.

Preserve and Improve the Public Housing Stock Through the Capital Fund Program
Activities, Including Modernization of Several Units.

HACEP administers the HUD financed Capital Fund Program and anticipates receiving \$9,808,000 for Fiscal Year 2005 for its 6,028 public housing dwelling units and 495 Section 8 New Construction (project based) dwellings to maintain and preserve it's housing stock. In addition, implement energy conservation measures within public housing, provide for and improve the management of public housing developments, and provide support activities to achieve the highest feasible levels of economy and efficiency.

Beyond Public Housing HACEP has increased its Voucher Program by 882 for a total of 5034 vouchers available to HACEP, opened a 50 unit Migrant Worker Housing complex, and acquired 496 Low Income Housing Tax Credits dwelling units (LIHTC). HACEP will administer 12,103 housing units that will provide shelter to almost 40,000 persons in the City of El Paso.

In addition to on-going maintenance and modernization activities, HACEP plans to acquire or build additional units by year-end 2005. HACEP in coalition with El Paso MH/MR will be developing a twenty two (22) bedroom facility to house clients from El Paso MH/MR. HACEP through Replacement Housing funding will build four (4) quadruplexes for an additional eight (8) housing units both two and three-bedroom type. It is anticipated that HACEP will receive a \$20,000,000.00 dollar HOPE VI grant to revitalize Alamito complex and incorporate tax credit properties as well as homeownership units.

HACEP will continue to explore initiatives to expand the availability of affordable housing by applying for CDBG, National Historical Preservation Fund, and foundation funds to rehabilitate homes in the central area, and possibly selling rehabilitated homes. With consistent budget shortfalls HACEP will be searching for additional grants that will assist in creation of new housing or betterments while also seeking out potential non-profit agencies as leveraging partners.

HACEP will continue to increase its housing stock and make general improvements to existing housing inventory while continuing it's mission to provide affordable, safe, decent housing while continuing to support the President's priority to end homelessness in ten years.

Identify, Develop and Leverage Services to Enable Low-Income Families to Become Self-Sufficient

For the Families and Youth, HACEP has established partnerships with El Paso Independent School District (EPISD) who leverage funds and applied for a Parks and Recreation Grant and Criminal Justice Department Grant to serve the Housing Children. EPISD works with HACEP to offer Summer Educational Programs to the Youth in Elementary School. EPISD operates a satellite Summer Institute at Eisenhower for the High School youth that need to take summer school. EPISD, with HACEP, has tutorial Programs at four Communities. Ysleta Independent School District (YISD) will have tutorial programs throughout the Community Halls. Girls Scouts of the Rio Grande applied for a grant to serve the Housing Children. Boys and Girls Club are at the HACEP communities. YWCA is offering the Teen Clubs in different Communities. The Resident Relations Specialist worked with the communities to encourage youth to apply for scholarships offered through the NAHRO organization and other scholarships specially targeted for residents of Housing.

In the area of Senior Advocacy, we had Workshops on Neighbors helping Neighbors. Elderly Domestic Abuse Presentations, Citizenship Classes at Father Pinto, Williams, and Machuca public housing apartment complexes. English as a Second Language (ESL) and Health Education classes were also held at different communities through Partnership with EPCC. The Resident Relations Specialist did referrals on special cases as needed. Tai-Chi classes were given at 6 Community Centers, which proved to be very beneficial to the health of the elderly.

Coffee with the Doctor was held at the elderly communities through a partnership with Dr. Luna. Classes were offered on Diabetes Awareness and Screenings, Upper Respiratory Problems, Fall Prevention, Hypertension and Stroke, Handling and Consuming Medications. Transportation if offered for Grocery Shopping for the Elderly. Flu Immunization Campaign and Health Screenings were offered at the 11 Elderly Communities. HACEP collaborated with Fort Bliss in the Doll Ladies Project. HACEP held an Elderly Christmas Party and took the Residents to the St George Orthodox Church Christmas Party.

In addition to creating improved relations between residents and management, these Resident Associations give public housing a new meaning of “transitional housing” and a true sense of empowerment and mobilization. Under this concept, public housing is viewed as a stepping-stone toward attainment of home ownership and self-sufficiency. During 2005-2006, the Housing Authority’s Resident Relations Department will provide technical assistance and moral support to encourage resident initiatives. HACEP will conduct capacity building activities in the areas of organizational development, leadership development, financial management, grant writing, and peer education to strengthen the Resident Associations.

HACEP will develop new resources and coordinate existing ones within the community to provide and facilitate social services to families, elderly residents, and persons with disabilities.

HOMEOWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES are created by the HACEP thru the HCV (Section 8) FSS Homeownership program. Client Voucher holders progress towards homeownership through various partnering organizations including: El Paso Affordable Credit Unions Service Organization, Wells Fargo Bank, Verde Mortgage Company, El Paso Housing Finance Corporation, the El Paso Empowerment Zone, Realtors and the Greater El Paso Association of Realtors, Builders, Title Companies, and the County Bond Program for Down Payment Assistance (Via Verde Mortgage), and other community development organizations, all working together to help families move into their own homes. Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac play a significant part with the purchase of loans on the Secondary Market.

HACEP will also promote home ownership by collaborating with Wells Fargo, the El Paso Credit Union, the YWCA Home Buyer Education Division and Consumer Credit Counseling Services, Guadalupe Economic Services Corporation, the Greater El Paso Housing Development Corporation and other community development corporations to help families move into their own homes. The Housing Authority also will use the Fannie Mae Momet Plus Desktop Home Counselor software to provide information to residents.

Provide Equal Opportunities to all Residents

The Housing Authority continues to pursue initiatives that promote and provide opportunities for its residents through Section 8 employment opportunities, regular HACEP employment opportunities and a community business loan program requiring some residents to employ by the loan recipients. HACEP staff establishes links with Companies and agencies in El Paso to assist residents to find employment.

Involve the Council of Presidents, Public Housing Residents and Section 8 Participants on the Preparation of the Agency Plan

Council of Presidents, public housing residents and Section 8 participants were consulted for their input in preparing the HACEP PHA Plan 5-Year Plan for fiscal years 2005-2009. Housing residents are also provided with technical assistance and training through NAHRO trainings and funded through the Resident Participation Fund and authorized by the Council of Presidents.

Council of Presidents worked on an MOU between the Housing Authority and the Council of Presidents. Also the Residents worked on revising the By-laws. Election of Resident Associations is on going as the need arises. The Budget for the Resident Participation Funds will be prepared and submitted for approval by the Council of Presidents and the Board of Commissioners. It will include trainings, Education and Leadership for the Residents.

Provide Training to Staff and Commissioners to Fully Understand and Take Advantage of Opportunities Under Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act (QHWRA) of 1998 to Better Serve our Residents and the Community

The Housing Authority hold a special training seminars for Commissioners and Executive Staff members to fully understand and take advantage of opportunities under QHWRA of 1998 to better serve the residents and community. In addition, as a part of the annual and 5-yr plan process, meetings and training are ongoing with HACEP staff to cover the removal of disincentives for residents to work and become self-sufficient, to go over providing rental protection for low-income residents, to investigate the creation of mixed-finance public housing projects, and work with our local city government giving more power and flexibility to operate our housing programs. HACEP has full-time positions, such as, Family Self-Sufficiency Specialist, Resident Job Resource Specialist, Resident Relations Specialist, and Homeownership Coordinator to help with the process of using QHWRA initiatives to help the Residents.

Program Specific Requirement

CDBG

A detailed description of how the City's 31st Year Community Development Block Grant in the amount of \$9,699,358, the retrieved funds from completed projects in the amount of \$4,597,812 and Program Income in the amount of \$1,000,000, will be expended is provided in the List of Proposed Projects.

Aside from the Program Income described in the Funding Sources Table located on page 138, there are no other CDBG funds expected to be available in the 31st Program Year.

HOME

Other Forms of Investment

The City does not expect to use other forms of investment than those identified as eligible under the HOME Program: equity investments, interest-bearing loans or advances, non-interest bearing loans or advances, deferred payment loans, grants, and interest subsidies.

First-Time Homebuyer Assistance

The City will utilize \$1,500,000 in fiscal year 2005 HOME funds for a First-Time Homebuyers Assistance (FTHA) Program to assist 75 homebuyers. In addition, \$700,000 of HOME program income will be allocated from the local HOME Investments Trust Account to assist 35 homebuyers through the FTHA Program. Also this year, the City of El Paso will augment homebuyer assistance funding with the American Dream Downpayment Initiative (ADDI) in the amounts of \$100,341. The ADDI funding will be